9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

361 would "spoil" social relations. Even in the larger towns the
[369] shopkeeper is reluctant to have his bills completely settled by
[443] his customers. These personal ties readily give rise to cliques and municipal corruption: it must be admitted that the

[162]

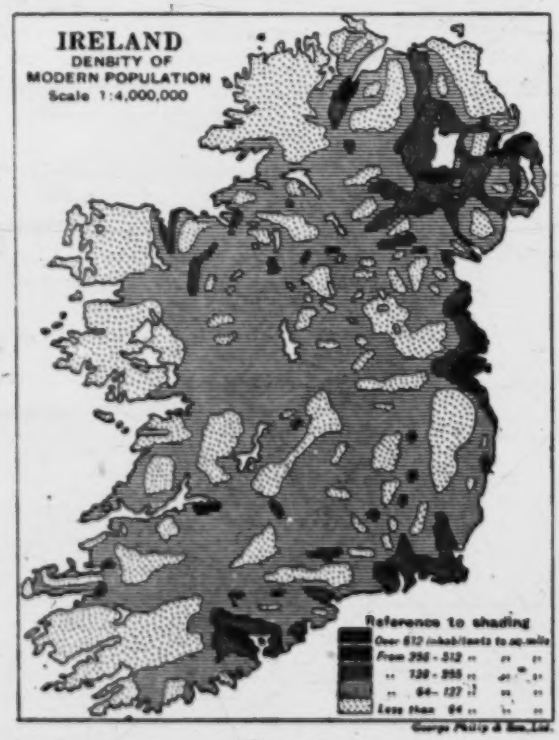
IRELAND
DENSITY OF
MODERN POPULATION
Scale 1:4,000,000
Reference to shading
Over 612 inhabitants to sq. mile
From 356 - 512 " " "
" 128 - 255 " " "
" 64 - 127 " " "
Less than 64 " " "

Fig. 108.

corporate spirit is poorly developed. Similarly the Irish
country town is generally lacking in any native traditions of
[344] civic architecture, and even the splendid buildings of Dublin and Galway together with the distinctive court-houses of smaller towns owe much to outside influence. The small

14: Westropp B-4, 5 (no date)1910-12
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

346 773 founder of the building, and is held to explain the rude and inferior work of parts of it. Quin "Abbey" was built by the famous Master Mason Gobbán Saor, who twisted the spiral pillars of its beautiful cloister with his own hands. The builder of the south transept (1433) fell from its gable, and was killed where a tombstone with the scribed figure of an axe marks his grave. The north-west corner of Carran church overhangs, and is destined to fall on the wisest man that shall pass below it.

344 773 *Castles.*—A belief similar to that about Carran church was attached to Ballymulcassel or Mountcashel castle. It is a peel tower, built by King Conor na Srona, about 1460, on a steep little knoll of rock beside the road from Sixmilebridge to Kilkishen. It was to fall on the handsomest person, and gossip told of a very ugly man who always took a longer road to avoid passing it. The same legend and gossip was attached to Newcastle peel tower, near Limerick and not far from the border of Clare. A wizard who lived in Shalee castle was so pestered by his wife that he flew away with half the tower, which remains as Glen castle near Ennistymon station. A guest praised Dysert castle to its owner, O'Dea, and wished that it were full of gold. "I'd rather have it full of O'Hiumhairs," replied O'Dea,[7] the family so complimented being a small but warlike clan, of which one member fought in the wars of 1313-8 and is reported to have slain Richard de Clare at Dysert in 1318. I heard in 1869 that the castles near Doonass were built by seven brothers, and that six came to an untimely end at the hands of the seventh, but the legend seems now forgotten at Clonlara.

344 173

346 776 173 *Round Towers.*—The peasants seem never to have adopted the various druidic, Cuthite, phallic, and other theories of 1770 onwards from the so-called "educated classes." To them, as to our earlier writers, the towers are steeples built by saints. John Lloyd, in 1780,[8] calls that of Scattery "the loftiest old Steeple in the Kingdom." Michael O'Brannan, in 1794,[9] tells how St.

[7] *Ordnance Survey Letters* (Co. Clare), vol. i., p. 157. The tale closely resembles a legend of St. Caimin of Iniscaltra and Guaire Aidhne at Iniscaltra, Lough Derg.

[8] *A Short Tour etc.*, p. 21.

[9] Poem on Shannon, *Ordnance Survey Letters* (Co. Clare), vol. ii., pp. 15-8.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

Coast guard personnel first were assigned to Inis Beag shortly after the lighthouse was built. Three guardsmen and their families lived in private dwellings in Terrace Village until the large station was erected after 1883 in Low Village, following which the contingent was enlarged to four men. The two-story structure contains four apartments, and these housed the families of the personnel until 1922. Now owned by the Irish Land Commission, two apartments are rented by islanders who sublet them to visitors; a third accommodates the nurse; and the other has been converted into a government sponsored knitting "factory" which employs local girls. One of the several outbuildings of the station contains the breeches buoy apparatus of the Coast Life Saving Service. The life saving company is composed of 15 Inis Beag men, hired and supervised by a branch of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and was responsible for the rescue of the freighter's crew in 1960—its only rescue operation since being formed almost 60 years ago. A boathouse was erected on the strand by the coast guard company, and now it serves as an all-purpose building: dance hall, trade school, storage house, and meeting place.

Health services are provided the folk by a nurse, a doctor who lives in a neighboring island, and medical and dental personnel from the mainland who visit the island occasionally for specific examination and treatment purposes. A much renowned mainland woman who lived in Inis Beag intermittently between 1903 and 1923 (and wrote a book about her experiences) was the first nurse to serve the islanders; but since 1932, the Lady Dudley Nursing Scheme of Dublin has maintained "Jubilee Nurses" in Inis Beag continuously, each one serving from one to five years. The nurse is responsible to the doctor, from whom she obtains medicines furnished by the county council, and handles most of the medical cases which arise. Bedridden patients and women who are secretive about their ailments are visited by her during two daily rounds, while after dark she is visited by other patients, mostly men, who are also secretive about their infirmities, and she may be called out on emergencies. The doctor comes to Inis Beag once a month and visits the seriously ill accompanied by the nurse, and in the case of emergencies at other times which cannot be taken care of by her, he is brought over in the lifeboat of the Coast Life Saving Service at her summons.

The post office in High Village is an adjunct to the house of its supervisor, just as the shops are to the homes of their proprietors. The office is a small room with a counter, separating the clerk and her desk and switchboard from those who do business there, and a telephone booth. A radio telephone serves the island and can be used between nine o'clock in the morning and six at night. A line runs to the house of "Number One" of the life saving company, which he alone can use in matters pertaining to the service during the prescribed hours. When the freighter ran aground before dawn, it was discovered by islanders who informed the company; Radio Eireann reported the plight of the vessel, on the basis of S.O.S. messages, in the seven o'clock news, but the company had reached the reef before the telephone was available.

Inis Beag has only a small church, known as the "chapel." After the church of the patron saint was abandoned, a house served as the place of worship for a time, then was superseded by the old chapel whose foundations can be discerned

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

teachers, whose influence and attention earn for the children of these families the greater share of scholarship funds.

Not only has education abroad been a major pull factor in emigration, but local education as well in the form of a summer language school for mainland children, which was established in 1960 and has convened for two months each year ever since. Over a hundred students—in two shifts of a month apiece—attend the school, where in addition to learning Irish formally and speaking it in the homes where they are lodged, they are instructed in singing, playing musical instruments, and set dancing in the traditional mold. Monies from Gaeltacht Eireann support the director from the mainland and the Inis Beag headmaster who teach, a skilled musician who provides music for dancing and also instructs, and the students. Eight hundred pounds were channeled into the local economy in 1960 by this nativistic endeavor hopefully aimed at propagating Gaelic and halting emigration. The influence of the visiting children, who interact with their island counterparts at home and at outdoor dances each evening, is considerable; the outsiders tend to be critical of conditions in Inis Beag and boast of the superiority in every dimension of life on the mainland. It is questionable whether the school has diminished the push effect of emigration by enlivening the social atmosphere of the island as much as it has increased the pull effect by creating even more discontent among young people. There are those who denounce the language school on the grounds that the visiting children speak more English than Irish in the local homes; that many islanders in their greed for profit do not provide adequately for the students assigned to them; and that some of the mainlanders are openly promiscuous and thus subvert the morality of Inis Beag youths.

Since 1960, priests have become more realistic in their appraisal of the causes of emigration and have taken steps to enliven further the social milieu of the island. They have been responsible for introducing set dancing and tin whistle playing instruction in the national school, for organizing yearly athletic, canoe rowing, and dancing competitions between folk of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar, for building the dance hall to serve various purposes, and for setting up a small lending library of books in the school. The hall was built with a Gaeltacht Eireann grant, the free labor of island men, and money gifts solicited from interested parties all over the world. It resembles its predecessor—the boathouse on the strand built by the coast guard company—in that it functions as dance hall, trade school, storage house, and meeting place; but it is much larger and better constructed and has many more facilities than the latter. The folk view it as a mixed blessing, for they disliked building it without being paid wages, and feel now that it is not available to them enough of the time, and when it is, they are charged by the curate to attend dances and view television. Many believe that church and government should have provided wages to the builders to compensate for farming and other time lost, and that "the key of the hall shouldn't be in the priest's pocket." Since its completion, the building has accommodated most of the activities of the language school.

In contrast to the islanders who are deeply committed to the local culture and fear that Inis Beag will become depopulated within the next generation, there